

Major Work Stoppages

Technical Note

Major work stoppages are those involving 1,000 workers or more and lasting a full shift or longer, and includes worker-initiated strikes, as well as lockouts by employers. A strike is defined as a temporary stoppage of work by a group of workers (not necessarily members of a union) to express a grievance or enforce a demand. A lockout is a temporary withholding or denial of employment during a labor dispute to enforce terms of employment upon a group of employees. Because of the complexity of disputes, the Bureau does not attempt to distinguish between strikes and lockouts in its statistics; both are included in the term "work stoppage" and are used interchangeably.

Data for the number of workers involved and days of idleness include all workers made idle for one shift or longer in establishments directly involved in a stoppage.

They do not account for secondary idleness as a result of material or service shortages.

Data for days idle as a percent of estimated working time shows idleness as a percent of available working time. Available working time is computed by multiplying the total employment during the reference period by the number of days typically worked by most employees during that period.

Additional Information

For more detailed data, contact the Division of Compensation Data Analysis and Planning, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington, DC 20212-001. Telephone: (202) 606-6275.

Table D-1. Work stoppages involving 1,000 workers or more, 1947-98¹

Period	Number of stoppages		Workers involved		Days idle	
	Beginning in period	In effect during period	Beginning in period (thousands)	In effect during period (thousands)	Number (thousands)	Percent of estimated working time ²
1947	270	-	1,629	-	25,720	(?)
1948	245	-	1,435	-	26,127	0.22
1949	262	-	2,537	-	43,420	.38
1950	424	-	1,698	-	30,390	.26
1951	415	-	1,462	-	15,070	.12
1952	470	-	2,746	-	48,820	.38
1953	437	-	1,623	-	18,130	.14
1954	265	-	1,075	-	16,630	.13
1955	363	-	2,055	-	21,180	.16
1956	287	-	1,370	-	26,840	.20
1957	279	-	887	-	10,340	.07
1958	332	-	1,587	-	17,900	.13
1959	245	-	1,381	-	60,850	.43
1960	222	-	896	-	13,260	.09
1961	195	-	1,031	-	10,140	.07
1962	211	-	793	-	11,760	.08
1963	181	-	512	-	10,020	.07
1964	246	-	1,183	-	16,220	.11
1965	268	-	999	-	15,140	.10
1966	321	-	1,300	-	16,000	.10
1967	381	-	2,192	-	31,320	.18
1968	392	-	1,855	-	35,367	.20
1969	412	-	1,576	-	29,397	.16
1970	381	-	2,468	-	52,761	.29
1971	298	-	2,516	-	35,538	.19
1972	250	-	975	-	16,764	.09
1973	317	-	1,400	-	16,260	.08
1974	424	-	1,796	-	31,809	.16
1975	235	-	965	-	17,563	.09
1976	231	-	1,519	-	23,962	.12
1977	298	-	1,212	-	21,258	.10
1978	219	-	1,006	-	23,774	.11
1979	235	-	1,021	-	20,409	.09
1980	187	-	795	-	20,844	.09
1981	145	-	729	-	16,908	.07
1982	96	-	656	-	9,061	.04
1983	81	-	909	-	17,461	.08
1984	62	-	376	-	8,499	.04
1985	54	-	324	-	7,079	.03
1986	69	-	533	-	11,861	.05
1987	46	-	174	-	4,481	.02
1988	40	-	118	-	4,381	.02
1989	51	-	452	-	16,996	.07
1990	44	-	185	-	5,926	.02
1991	40	-	392	-	4,584	.02
1992	35	-	364	-	3,989	.01
1993	35	-	182	-	3,981	.01
1994	45	-	322	-	5,021	.02
1995	35	-	192	-	5,771	.02
1995 Through July	15	18	120.4	135.6	2,560.1	.01
1996 ¹ Through July	25	26	241.3	243.8	3,657.7	.02

¹ The numbers of stoppages and workers relate to stoppages that began in the year. However, days of idleness include all stoppages in effect, including those continuing from the previous year. Workers are counted more than once if they are involved in more than one stoppage during the year.

² Agricultural and government employees are included in the total employed

and total working time; private households, forestry, and fishery employees are excluded.

³ Data not available.

p = preliminary.

Table D-2. Work stoppages involving 1,000 workers or more, May 1996^p

Organizations involved and location ¹	Beginning date	Ending date	Number of workers ²	Days of idleness during May
Detroit Free Press and Detroit News Detroit, MI Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions and Teamsters	7/13/95		2,500	55,000
Trailmobile Charleston, IL Paperworkers	1/21/96		1,100	24,200
Crown Cork and Seal Co. Interstate Machinists	4/19/96		1,000	22,000
Grocery industry (Safeway and King Soopers) Denver, CO, area Food and Commercial Workers	5/14/96		14,500	181,000
Southeast Michigan Roofing Contractors Association and Independent companies Detroit, MI Roofers	5/30/96		1,000	2,000
Stoppages beginning in May: 2			15,500	
Stoppages in effect in May: 5			20,100	284,200

¹ Labor organizations are affiliated with the AFL-CIO except where noted as independent (Ind.).

² The number of workers involved is rounded to the nearest hundred.
p = preliminary.

Table D-3. Work stoppages involving 1,000 workers or more, June 1996^p

Organizations involved and location ¹	Beginning date	Ending date	Number of workers ²	Days of idleness during June
Detroit Free Press and Detroit News Detroit, MI Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions and Teamsters	7/13/96		2,500	50,000
Trailmobile Charleston, IL Paperworkers	1/21/96		1,100	22,000
Crown Cork and Seal Co. Interstate Machinists	4/19/96	6/8/96	1,000	5,000
Grocery industry (Safeway and King Soopers) Denver, CO, area Food and Commercial Workers	5/14/96	6/25/96	14,500	246,500
Southeast Michigan Roofing Contractors Association and independent companies Detroit, MI Roofers	5/30/96	6/9/96	1,000	5,000
NBC Merchants, Inc. Evansville, IN Needletrades	6/1/96	6/14/96	1,300	13,000
Northern Illinois Mason Employers Council Parkridge, IL Bricklayers	6/1/96	6/12/96	5,000	40,000
Bay area cleaning companies Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, and San Mateo Counties, CA Service Employees	6/3/96		4,900	98,000
McDonnell Douglas Aerospace Interstate Machinists	6/5/96		6,700	120,600
League of Voluntary Hospitals New York, NY Service Employees	6/24/96		6,000	30,000
Stoppages beginning in June:	5		23,900	
Stoppages in effect in June:	10		44,000	630,100

¹ Labor organizations are affiliated with the AFL-CIO except where noted as independent (Ind.).

² The number of workers involved is rounded to the nearest hundred.
p = preliminary.

Table D-4. Work stoppages involving 1,000 workers or more, July 1996^a

Organizations involved and location ¹	Beginning date	Ending date	Number of workers ²	Days of idleness during July
Detroit Free Press and Detroit News Detroit, MI Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions and Teamsters	7/13/96		2,500	55,000
Trailmobile Charleston, IL Paperworkers	1/21/96	7/3/96	1,100	3,300
Bay area cleaning companies Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, and San Mateo Counties, CA Service Employees	6/3/96	7/2/96	4,900	9,800
McDonnell Douglas Aerospace Interstate Machinists	6/5/96		6,700	147,400
League of Voluntary Hospitals New York, NY Service Employees	6/24/96		6,000	132,000
National Steel and Shipbuilding Co. San Diego, CA Various Unions	7/17/96		2,500	27,500
Pemco Aeroplex Inc. Birmingham, AL Automobile Workers	7/22/96		1,100	8,800
Stoppages beginning in July: 2			3,600	
Stoppages in effect in July: 7			24,800	363,800

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² The number of workers involved is rounded to the nearest hundred. p = preliminary.